



UNITED STATES SENATE
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20510

September 18, 2012

The Honorable Eric H. Holder, Jr.
Attorney General of the United States
U.S. Department of Justice
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, District of Columbia 20530-0001

Dear Attorney General Holder,

I am writing to ask that the Department of Justice take prompt and effective steps to enforce existing laws against anti-competitive and illegal market manipulation that is inflating gasoline prices at the pump.

At a time when so many Americans are struggling, spikes in the prices of gasoline and other basic commodities are particularly harmful to American families. The harm caused by speculators in inflating gas prices is especially damaging. The price at the pump in Connecticut has risen to \$4.15 and shows no sign of going back down. Such drastic increases in prices have far-ranging ramifications in undercutting our entire economy. Americans need gasoline to get to school and work; businesses need it to get their products to market; and, our economy needs it to sustain growth and create jobs.

I urge the Department of Justice to use existing and new legal tools to investigate and crack down on anti-competitive and manipulative practices.

Clearly, some tools are already available. More than a year ago, the Department established the Oil and Gas Price Fraud Working Group to combine and coordinate resources of several agencies against wrongful manipulation of energy markets. As I have stated in public hearings, I encourage you to use this tool as aggressively and effectively as possible. Speculators who make profits by artificially inflating the cost of a basic commodity should be identified and shut down. Strong scrutiny can send a message that discourages and deters wrongful speculation. I look forward to working with you to protect our citizens from price manipulation and bring gas prices back to earth.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter. I look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Richard Blumenthal". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Richard" being the most prominent.

Richard Blumenthal
United States Senate